

The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

New North Patrol Division opens

About 300 community members, police and city officials celebrated the grand opening of the new North Patrol Division station with tours and a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 23.

"This facility replaces the rather iconic building at Barry Road and 169 Highway that many of you affectionately have

known as the 'Bumblebee,'" Interim Chief of Police David Zimmerman said. "Well-known as it may be, that building could no longer function as one of our police stations."

When it opened in 1976, about 15 people were assigned to North Patrol Division. Commensurate with the area's population growth, there are now 95 KCPD members assigned to North Patrol, making the old building extremely cramped. In addition to its size, the "Bumblebee" had limited parking, structural problems, security issues, and a detention area that was no longer usable.

The new station at 11000 N.W. Prairie View Road sits on nine acres adjacent to the KCI Airport. The land already was City-owned. At 26,500 square feet, it is 77 percent larger than the "Bumblebee." The construction cost of the project was \$9 million and was funded by the Public Safety Sales Tax voters approved in 2010. This is the final major police capital project of that tax. Combined with the first sales tax approved in 2002, the City and KCPD have replaced five aging police stations, remodeled the nearly 80-year-old Headquarters building, and constructed a new Crime Lab, Evidence Warehouse, Police Academy and Multi-Purpose Building.

As the first Kansas City Police station in Platte County, the



As North Patrol Division officers held the ribbon, Major Roger Lewis and past, present Board of Police Commissioners and City Councilmembers cut it to open the new station June 23.

new North Patrol will serve the growing west side of the Northland.

"The Northland is approximately 40 percent developed at this point, with a strong potential for population growth and commercial development," Second District City Councilmember Dan Fowler said. "The 15,000-acre Twin Creeks development east of the KCI Airport is expected to grow the population of KCMO and Platte County by 70,000

people during the next 20 years, according to the Platte County Economic Development Council. It is likely the North Patrol Division officers would serve all of those people."

Community members who attended the ribbon-cutting event had the opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes tour of the station in areas that won't be open to the public. They also got to see community amenities that weren't available at the old station, such as a community meeting space and outdoor patio for public use.

Although the ribbon-cutting and open-house took place June 23, the new North Patrol officially opened for business 6 a.m. June 28. North Patrol Division members lowered the American flag at the old station at sunrise on June 26 and transported it for display at the new station that morning. The North Patrol station was closed for two days for personnel to move to their new digs.

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Study: Body cam program to be costly

The results of last fall's body-worn camera pilot project were unveiled this month, revealing the program could cost more than \$5 million.

"Philosophically, we support body-worn cameras and would have implemented them six months ago if money wasn't an issue," Deputy Chief Bob Kuehl said.

The KCPD engaged in a 12-week pilot project in 2016 to determine the cost and infrastructure required to implement body-worn cameras on all patrol officers. The pilot project was a very scaled one. The cameras were used only by a few squads at a time. Just those few officers produced an average of 147 videos totaling 82,000 megabytes (MB) a day. The whole project produced 9,300 videos and 5.1 million MB total. Scaling that upward department-wide, staff determined KCPD would need 2.4 petabytes of storage (that's more than 1 billion megabytes). They took into consideration that video must be stored for at least 90 days because that's how long residents have to file a complaint. Under the industry-standard 5-year contract, that kind of storage would cost about \$3.2 million.

Those are just the storage costs. The department also would incur initial equipment costs, such as cameras and servers, and annual maintenance fees. Additional staff also would be necessary to handle the increased requests for the videos both for department investigative elements and from prosecutors and other attorneys, media and the public. Two new network administrator positions also would be needed.

Finally, there is the infrastructure piece. In



order to get the videos from the patrol stations where they will be downloaded to the central server, the Department needs a robust fiber optic connection.

"We can have all the data in the world, but if there's no highway for it to travel on, it does no one any good," Deputy Chief Kuehl said in his presentation of the project's results to the Board of Police Commissioners.

KCPD's current bandwidth is just enough to handle the videos and storage from the existing in-car camera systems. It could not handle the additional data. Fortunately, police are working with the City's Information Technology Department on implementing these fiber solutions.

In their research, Department members also found too many agencies that – in an effort to

launch body-worn cameras quickly – created a program that was unsustainable. Some are even being forced to roll back their programs.

"We have taken a very measured approach because we want to be good stewards who will keep the promises we make," Interim Chief David Zimmerman said. "If we say we're going to implement body-worn cameras, we will, and we will have the storage, infrastructure and personnel to properly support and maintain them."

A group of department members also met with many community members to draft a policy for body-worn cameras and the footage they capture.

"We listened to their concerns and combined them with lessons other law enforcement agencies

have learned in their use of body-worn cameras to create a policy that we believe fosters transparency and accountability while protecting community members' privacy," Chief Zimmerman said.

KCPD has long been supportive of video to ensure accountability, to identify any issues that could require training and to provide indisputable accounts of incidents, Chief Zimmerman said. The Department's in-car camera systems have been in use since 1999 and are currently installed on all 337 patrol cars. Deputy Chief Kuehl said any body-worn camera systems must complement the in-car cameras already in place.

Department members will now work with both elected City officials and staff to determine funding priorities, not just for the police department but for all city services.



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In fact, residents and businesses throughout North Patrol Division should not expect any change in response times with the change in the station's location. Officers are dispatched from wherever they are on the streets, not from the station.

The new station was designed by Treanor Architects and built by Turner Construction. It has many features to improve officers' and staff members' safety, efficiency and comfort.

Visitors to the station will notice the One Percent for Art piece to the right of the main entrance. The granite sculpture by Frank Swanson is titled "To Serve and Protect" and is intended to convey the strong relationship between the Kansas City Missouri Police Department and the community it serves.

The old "Bumblebee" station at 1001 N.W. Barry Rd. is for sale.

Police Foundation Board names new chair, honors outgoing one



Frank Uryasz

Jerry Reece, Chairman of the Kansas City Police Foundation, officially stepped down on June 8.

"Jerry cares deeply for the men and women of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department and worked tirelessly to raise funds to support them," said Ron Fletcher, CEO and President of the Police Foundation.

The Foundation collected a little more than a million dollars while Reece was chairman. During his tenure, a target-area project was funded worth close to \$475,000. It will cover a 1.8 square-mile area that has been identified as the most violent area in Kansas City, Mo.

Replacing Jerry Reece is Frank Uryasz, who has 25 years of senior management experience in educational and athletic organizations. Frank is the President of Drug Free Sport. He presently serves as a consultant to the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports. While serving 12 years as NCAA Director of Sports Sciences, he established the NCAA's national drug testing system. Frank received his undergraduate degree in life sciences and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



More than 160 people came to a KCPD community recruitment fair on June 24.

KCPD: "We're hiring"

After years of a "limited hiring freeze" imposed by tight budgets, the Kansas City Missouri Police Department once again is recruiting heavily to add personnel to the ranks.

"Based on the class sizes we're being authorized right now, over the next three years we need to hire 250 to 300 officers" said Captain Chris Sicoli, commander of the Employment Unit. "That may be on the conservative side, too."

Captain Sicoli said the Unit is planning for the future by looking at the past. He pointed to the large Academy classes with 40 to 50 people the Department had in the early to mid-1990s.

"People hired on then are hitting their 25 years (of service, when they become eligible to retire)," he said. "And they needed those big classes then because everyone hired in the '60s was retiring. It's cyclical. You can see it coming."

As of May 31, the department had 1,299 sworn officers. There were more than 1,420 in 2008 and 2009, according to KCPD Annual Reports. The decrease in officers has led to increased response times.

Although the department always took applications, the years of what Captain Sicoli called a "limited hiring freeze" took their toll on recruitment efforts.

"We want to get our name out again," he said. "People take for granted sometimes that we exist. We have to show recruiting is an active thing; it has to be maintained. You have to keep your brand out there."

It's not just law enforcement positions that need filling, either. The Department also is hurting for dispatchers, building operations technicians, mechanics, de-

tention officers and patrol desk clerks.

So the department is ramping up its recruitment efforts to attract quality candidates for all these jobs. A group of members from across the department is meeting regularly to develop a formal recruitment campaign. And a recent community recruitment fair was a resounding success. More than 160 people attended the fair at the Brush Creek Community Center on June 24 to express interest in working for KCPD.

"If you want your department to reflect the community, you have to go out to the community," Captain Sicoli said. "You can't wait for them to come to you. Because of budget issues, we've been waiting for people to come to us."

The turn-out at the June 24 recruitment fair proved the community was ready to be part of KCPD. The Communications Unit alone racked up three pages of people who signed papers saying they were interested in applying, Sicoli said. The event was the first KCPD-specific recruitment event in recent memory, and Sicoli said it was much more successful than other more generic forums recruiters have attended. It worked so well that the Employment Unit is going to try to do the fairs quarterly in various parts of the city.

As always, however, everything is budget-dependent. Captain Sicoli said the numbers the department is looking to hire now are within budget. The results of a department staffing study are due out soon and could impact those estimates. But for now, Captain Sicoli wants KCPD members and other members of the community to know the department has a figurative "Help Wanted" sign up.

"This is a good job, and this is a good city," he said.

Upcoming Events

July 11

**Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting -
South Patrol Division**

July 12

Health Fair - HQ Annex

July 18

Health Fair - Academy

The mission of the
Kansas City Missouri
Police Department is to
protect and serve with
professionalism, honor
and integrity.

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Officially Speaking

Awards

Special Unit Citation

Economic Crimes Section
Master Detective James Agnew
Detective Larry Alderman
Detective Melinda Reno
Metro Patrol Division:
Sergeant Robert Ballowe
Officer Christopher DeFreece
Officer LaSonia Epperson
Officer Kevin Green
Officer Bobbie King
Officer Edward Morales
Officer Justin Palmer

Life-Saving Award

Officer Austin Bax
Officer Hollie Brannen
Officer Patrick Lewis
Officer Miles Stucker
Officer Whitney Thomas

Meritorious Service Award

Detective Richard Hulme
Detective Ray Lenoir
Officer Joe Trombino
Officer Ian Weintraub

Certificate of Commendation

Sergeant Matthew Bandler
Officer Luke Abouhalkah
Officer Steven Bloch
Officer Belkis Cisneros
Officer Joshua Gantt
Officer Michael Green
Officer Michael Holsworth
Officer John Lawrence
Detective Melinda Reno
Retired Officer Sam Sneed
Officer Steven Weber

Purple Heart

Retired Officer Sam Sneed

25-Year Ring

Administrative Assistant Joyce Silvers

Retirements

Officer Dawn Lenley
Officer Jay McCune
Officer Erich Mutzbauer

Obituaries

Detective George (G.L.) Springer
Retired Captain Richard McKiddy
Retired Officer Larry Bewick
Retired Civilian Isacc Jefferson